

# **CAREER GUIDE FOR HEALTH EDUCATOR**

SOC Code: 21-1091

Pay Band(s): 3 and 4 ([Salary Structure](#))

**Standard Occupational Description:** Promote, maintain, and improve individual and community health by assisting individuals and communities to adopt healthy behaviors, giving presentations to address specific and general health prevention, risk reduction and health maintenance methods. Collect and analyze data to identify community needs prior to planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programs designed to encourage healthy lifestyles, policies and environments. May also serve as a resource to assist individuals, other professionals, or the community, and may administer fiscal resources for health education programs.

**Health Educator positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Education Support Services Career Group](#):**

[Education Support Specialist II](#)

[Education Support Specialist III](#)

While Health Educators within the Commonwealth are all located within the Education Support Services Career Group, individuals may want to pursue other opportunities within the Commonwealth depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Public Relations and Marketing](#)

[Counseling](#)

[Education Administration](#)

[Health Care Compliance](#)

[Program Administration](#)

[Training and Instruction](#)

## **SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS**

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

### **Skills**

**Note:** The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Health Educators commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

1. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
2. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
3. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.

4. Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem solving and decision-making.
5. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
6. Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
7. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
8. Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
9. Teaching others how to do something.
10. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.

## **Knowledge**

**Note:** The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Health Educators commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

### **The Knowledge of:**

1. Principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
2. Structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
3. Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
4. Media production, communication, and dissemination techniques and methods. This includes alternative ways to inform and entertain via written, oral, and visual media.
5. Information and techniques needed to diagnose and treat human injuries, diseases, and deformities. This includes symptoms, treatment alternatives, drug properties and interactions, and preventive health-care measures.
6. Principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.
7. Business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
8. Human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
9. Principles and methods for showing, promoting, and selling products or services. This includes marketing strategy and tactics, product demonstration, sales techniques, and sales control systems.

## **Abilities**

**Note:** The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Health Educators commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

The **Ability** to:

1. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
2. Speak clearly so others can understand you.
3. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
4. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
5. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
6. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).
7. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
8. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.

### **Tasks**

**Note:** *The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by Health Educators. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.*

1. Plans and provides educational opportunities for health personnel.
2. Collaborates with health specialists and civic groups to ascertain community health needs, determine availability of services, and to develop goals.
3. Promotes health discussions in schools, industry, and community agencies.
4. Conducts community surveys to ascertain health needs, develop desirable health goals, and determine availability of professional health services.
5. Prepares and disseminates educational and informational materials.
6. Develops and maintains cooperation between public, civic, professional, and voluntary agencies.

## **INTERESTED?**

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

The occupation of Health Educator has **Social, Investigative, Enterprising** and **Artistic** characteristics as described below:

**Social** — Social occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

**Investigative** — Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

**Enterprising** — Enterprising occupations frequently involve starting up and carrying out projects. These occupations can involve leading people and making many decisions. Sometimes they require risk taking and often deal with business.

**Artistic** — Artistic occupations frequently involve working with forms, designs and patterns. They often require self-expression and the work can be done without following a clear set of rules.

## **LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Generally this is not required for Health Educator positions in state government. However Health Educators may become certified. For information on how to become certified go to the National Commission For Health Education Credentialing, Inc. website: <http://www.nche.org/>.

Certification is useful for professional growth and career advancement.

A license is required for Health Educators who become classroom teachers.

## **EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Virginia Area Health Education Centers Program <http://www.ahec.vcu.edu/hcmanual.htm> provides the following information:

Health educators work with individuals, organizations and communities to bring about behavioral and environmental changes that foster good health. They apply theories and principles of behavioral and social sciences to design, organize implement, communicate and evaluate the effects of education programs and strategies related to health behaviors of individuals, families, organizations and communities.

Educational requirements are accredited undergraduate (bachelor's degree) and graduate level programs in health education and public health.

Agencies may offer additional training. Individuals who support technical service areas may be provided formal and on the job instruction in other health fields to allow them to better carry out their educational responsibilities.

Virginia Educational Institutions offering these programs are: Averett College, George Mason University, James Madison University, Liberty University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, Radford University, Roanoke College, University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Virginia State University.

## **COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES**

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

**The Commonwealth Competencies are:**

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results

4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: [http://jobs.state.va.us/cc\\_planningctr.htm](http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm). For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

## **COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH**

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example: **Health Educator**

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES
3	Education Support Specialist II
4	Education Support Specialist III


### **Sample Career Path**

#### **Education Support Specialist II**

The Education Support Specialist II role provides a career track for health educators whose duties ranges from entry-level to journey-level working within a defined region or identified area of an agency. Employees perform a variety of administrative and programmatic duties in support of educational programs.

### **Education Support Specialist III**

The Education Support Specialist III role provides a career track for health educator serving as coordinators performing journey to advanced level responsibilities. Employees serve as a resource, advisor, coordinator, and supervisor and/or educator in the delivery of designated educational or interpretive programs and support localities in their efforts to assess program/service needs.

### **ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:**

O\*NET (Occupational Information Network)

[http://online.onetcenter.org/gen\\_search\\_page](http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page)

Virginia Employment Commission

<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network <http://www.vacrn.net/>

### **Professional Organizations**

American Public Health Association

<http://www.apha.org/>

Virginia Public Health Association

<http://www.vapha.org/>

American Association for Health Education

<http://www.aahperd.org/aahe/>

Society for Public Health Education

<http://www.sophe.org/>